

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. - 8. (Canceled)

9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently amended): A method of operating a storage system-~~according~~  
~~to claim 9,~~  
wherein when a storage system detects that a remaining amount of its own storage  
area has become less than a predetermined value, a remote storage area is provided by  
performing a mount operation on one or more disk units at a remote storage system in  
communication with said storage system so that said remote storage area serves as said storage  
area,  
wherein a size and a speed of at least one of reading and writing specifications  
~~such as a size and a logic format~~ of said remote storage area to be utilized are notified from said  
storage system to said remote storage system, and  
wherein said remote storage system provides said remote storage area having said  
size and said speed specifications as the storage area for said storage system.

11. (Currently amended): A method of operating a storage system-~~according~~  
~~to claim 9,~~  
wherein when a storage system detects that a remaining amount of its own storage  
area has become less than a predetermined value, a remote storage area is provided by  
performing a mount operation on one or more disk units at a remote storage system in  
communication with said storage system so that said remote storage area serves as said storage  
area,

8                    wherein a utilization state of said remote storage area for said storage system is  
9 monitored in said remote storage system, and

10                   wherein whether or not ~~said storage area~~one or more spare disk units in said  
11 storage system is to be ~~increased~~used is decided according to said utilization state.

1                   12.     (Original): A method of operating a storage system~~according to claim 9~~,  
2                   wherein when a storage system detects that a remaining amount of its own storage  
3 area has become less than a predetermined value, a remote storage area is provided by  
4 performing a mount operation on one or more disk units at a remote storage system in  
5 communication with said storage system so that said remote storage area serves as said storage  
6 area,

7                   wherein data stored and managed in said remote storage area is copied to the  
8 storage area of said storage system when the storage area of said storage system is enlarged.

13-20. (Canceled)

1                   21.     (Currently amended): A method of operating a storage system,  
2                   wherein when a storage system detects that a remaining amount of its own storage  
3 area that is provided by at least one first disk unit installed in said storage system has become  
4 less than a predetermined value, a remote storage area that is provided by at least one second  
5 disk unit installed in a remote storage system in communication with said storage system is made  
6 available as said storage area by performing a mounting operation of said at least one second  
7 disk unit,

8                   wherein said storage system stores a correspondence between:

9                   a port ID for specifying each disk unit installed on said storage system,

10                  and

11                  an identifier of said first disk unit~~or an identifier of said second disk unit,~~

12                  and

13                    wherein, when said storage system uses said remote storage area as its storage  
14 area by performing a mounting operation, said storage system stores a correspondence between:  
15                    said port ID, and  
16                    an identifier of said second disk unit that is provided by ~~provides~~ said  
17 remote storage system area.